

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 03194 01 OF 02 031335Z

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10

LAB-04 NSAE-00 SIL-01 OIC-02 HA-05 AID-05 TRSE-00

OMB-01 AGRE-00 ACDA-12 HUD-02 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12

EUR-12 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03 JUSE-00

FTC-01 ABF-01 OES-07 CEQ-01 ICA-20 PA-02 /186 W

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R 031217Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 961

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 TUNIS 3194

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS NAM COLLECTIVE

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, PORG, TS

SUBJ: FIRST CONFERENCE OF LABOR MINISTERS OF NON-ALIGNED
AND OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

REF: TUNIS 3060

1. SUMMARY. MEMBER STATES PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO GREATER HORIZONTAL COOPERATION IN THE COMMON QUEST FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AS WELL AS TO DEVISE STRATEGIES FOR COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL LABOR BODIES. THE CONFERENCE REMAINED LARGELY APOLITICAL AND NON-IDEOLOGICAL. ILO FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL MATTERS WERE DISCUSSED WITHOUT DIRECT REFERENCE TO USG ACTIONS. THE TWO WORKING COMMITTEES OF THE CONFERENCE BOTH FOCUSED UPON THE NEED FOR DIRECTING INVESTMENTS INTO LABOR-INTENSIVE PRODUCTION AS A MAJOR MEANS TO STIMULATE EMPLOYMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF LABOR MINISTERS OF NON-ALIGNED AND OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES WAS HELD IN TUNIS FROM APRIL 24 THROUGH APRIL 26, 1978. (CONFERENCE UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 TUNIS 03194 01 OF 02 031335Z

ADJOURNED ONE DAY AHEAD OF SCHEDULE TO PERMIT DELEGATES TO ATTEND THEIR VARIOUS NATIONAL LABOR DAY CEREMONIES.) THE OVERALL THEME OF THIS MEETING WAS EMPLOYMENT AND PLANNING OF HUMAN RESOURCES. INAUGURAL DELIBERATIONS INCLUDED INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY N. WINALASENA OF SRI LANKA, CHAIRMAN OF THE GROUP OF NON-ALIGNED STATES, A WELCOMING ADDRESS BY TUNISIAN PRIME MINISTER HEDI NOUIRA,

AND SUBSTANTIVE SPEECHES BY FRANCIS BLANCHARD, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ILO; TAIEB LAHDHARI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ARAB LABOR ORGANIZATION; DR. ALAH AL SHAIKHLI OF THE UNDP; AND MOHAMMED JOMAA, TUNISIAN MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

3. DURING HIS REMARKS WHICH OFFICIALLY OPENED THE CONFERENCE, WINALASENA SAID: "IT IS A GREAT PITY THAT THE UNITED STATES PULLED OUT OF THE ILO AT THIS MOST CRITICAL STAGE, WHEN WE NEED THEIR TECHNOLOGICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. WE EARNESTLY HOPE THAT THE U.S. WILL REJOIN THE ORGANIZATION BEFORE LONG TO ASSIST THE LESS FORTUNATE BRETHREN IN ASIA, AFRICA AND IN OTHER AREAS OF THE WORLD IN THEIR HOUR OF NEED." FOLLOWING HIS WELCOME TO THE DELEGATES, MINISTER NOUIRA CALLED FOR POLITICAL SOLIDARITY, AGRICULTURAL IMPROVEMENT, AND DISARMAMENT IN THE THIRD WORLD. HE OBSERVED THAT "WE SHOULD FIRST RELY UPON OURSELVES." BLANCHARD OFFERED ILO FACILITIES AND EXPERTISE TO THE MEMBER STATES AND NOTED: "THE VERY CHOICE OF THE TWO THEMES FOR YOUR CONFERENCE -- THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE ILO IN THE FIELDS OF EMPLOYMENT, BASIC NEEDS AND HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECONDLY THE PROSPECTS OF HORIZONTAL COOPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THOSE FIELDS -- SHOWS THAT WHAT THE ILO WAS DOING CORRESPONDS VERY LARGELY TO WHAT IS ON THE MINDS OF THE COUNTRIES MOST DIRECTLY CONCERNED, AND SHOWS HOW UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 TUNIS 03194 01 OF 02 031335Z

WIDELY ITS INFLUENCE IS FELT."

4. LAHDHARI NOTED THAT "YOUR CONFERENCE IS BEING HELD AT A TIME WHEN THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN NORTH AND SOUTH, BETWEEN THE HAVES AND THE HAVE NOTS HAS BEEN BROKEN OFF...YOUR UNION AND THE COORDINATION OF YOUR ATTITUDES AND POLICIES ARE A FORCE WHICH MAY INFLUENCE AND TRANSFORM THE STUBBORN ATTITUDE OF THE CAPITALIST STATES WHO CLING TO RIGHTS WHICH THEY HAD WRESTED BY FORCE AND INJUSTICE FROM OUR DEVELOPING PEOPLES." AL SHAIKHLI ATTACKED THE THEORY OF COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE, CITING ITS DISASTROUS EFFECTS UPON WORKERS OF THE THIRD WORLD. ALSO, HE POINTED TO THE WORKS OF VARIOUS DISTINGUISHED ECONOMISTS WHO AGREED THAT NON-MATERIAL FACTORS -- INFORMATION, NOW-HOW, TECHNICAL SKILLS, TECHNOLOGIES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL METHODS -- ACCOUNT FOR 90 PERCENT OR MORE OF TRUE ECONOMIC GROWTH. YET ONLY 22 PERCENT OF ALL OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE SUPPORTS THE FURTHERANCE OF THESE HUMAN RESOURCES.

5. AFTER CHAIRING THE CONFERENCE BY ACCLAMATION, JOMAA PREDICTED THAT DECISIONS MADE BY THE LABOR MINISTERS' MEETING WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE ELIMINATION OF AN OUTWORN

INTERNATIONAL ORDER AND TO THE CREATION OF A NEW ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ORDER. NEXT HE ESTABLISHED TWO COMMITTEES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONFERENCE AGENDA. THE FIRST DEALT WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTION PLANS OF THE WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE (ILO/GENEVA/1976) AND OF THE FIFTH SUMMIT OF NON-ALIGNED STATES (COLOMBO/1977) AND WITH STRATEGIES FOR COOPERATION WITH UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTIONS. SENEGAL CHAIRED THIS COMMITTEE WITH INDONESIA AND CUBA AS VICE-CHAIRMAN AND YUGOSLAVIA AS RAPPORTEUR. HE SECOND COMMITTEE CONSIDERED WAYS AND MEANS OF HORIZAONTAL COOPERATION AMONG MEMBER STATES, ESPECIALLY IN THE AREAS OF EMPLOYMENT, HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, AND LABOR MIGRATION. INDIA HEADED THIS GROUP, PANAMA AND NIGERIA WERE VICE-CHAIRMAN, AND MAURITANIA, RAPPORTEUR.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 TUNIS 03194 01 OF 02 031335Z

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PAGE 01 TUNIS 03194 02 OF 02 031342Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 TUNIS 3194

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6. THE FINAL REPORT OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE ENDORSED BOTH THE COLOMBO ACTION PLAN AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE, PAYING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO BASIC HUMAN NEEDS, RAW MATERIALS, AND CREATION OF

EMPLOYMENT. THE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDED CONCENTRATION OF INVESTMENT IN INDUSTRIES USING HIGH LABOR INPUT; IT NOTED THOSE TECHNOLOGIES, SUCH AS ELECTRONICS, WHICH WERE AT ONCE MODERN AS WELL AS LABOR-INTENSIVE. THE COMMITTEE REPORT CALLED FOR REFORMS IN INCOME DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS, WORKER TRAINING, STATUS OF WOMEN AND YOUTH, LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP, AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT. IT OBSERVED TOO THAT ADEQUATE PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND STATISTICAL CAPABILITIES WERE INDISPENSIBLE TO ECONOMIC AND HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT.

7. THE SECOND COMMITTEE REPORT FOCUSED ITS ATTENTION UPON POSSIBLE AREAS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING STATES, SUCH AS EMPLOYMENT POLICY, WORKER EDUCATION, AND TECHNOLOGIES. AMONG ITS RECOMMENDATIONS WERE:

--LABOR-INTENSIVE INVESTMENTS, WITHOUT COMPROMISING TECHNICAL PROGRESS.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 TUNIS 03194 02 OF 02 031342Z

--EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND EXPERIENCE IN MANPOWER PLANNING, LABOR MARKETS, WORKER MIGRATION, SKILLED LABOR FLOWS TOWARD INDUSTRIALIZED STATES, AND IN STATISTICS.

--PRIORITY TREATMENT FOR LEAST-FAVORED AND DISINHERITED CLASSES FOR ENTRY INTO THE WORK FORCE, ESPECIALLY IN RURAL AREAS.

--CONTINUED AND INCREASED TECHNICAL IMPORTANCE FROM INTERNATIONAL BODIES, EXPERTS, AND ADVANCED STATES.

--IDENTIFICATION OF LABOR REQUIREMENTS AND TRAINING ESTABLISHED TO MEET THOSE NEEDS.

--COORDINATION AMONG COUNTRIES TO PROVIDE COMPLEMENTARITY OF VOCATIONAL TRAINING EFFORTS.

8. THE COORDINATING STATES -- TUNISIA, SRI LANKA, AND PANAMA -- WERE CHARGED WITH PRESENTING THE CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONFERENCE AT BELGRADE JULY 1978; AT THE SIXTH NON-ALIGNED SUMMIT MEETING TO BE HELD IN HAVANA; AT THE UN CONFERENCE FOR TECHNICAL COOPERATION BETWEEN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, BUENOS AIRES, SEPTEMBER 1978; AND AT THE ILO-SPONSORED WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE, GENEVA, JUNE 1979.

9. COMMENT. THIS CONFERENCE WAS ONE OF A RELATED SERIES WHICH INCLUDED THE WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE OF 1976 AND THE COLOMBO SUMMIT OF 1977. IN THE OPINIONS OF SOME ATTENDING DELEGATES AND JUDGING BY THE AMORPHOUS NATURE OF ITS RECOMMENDATIONS, THIS CONFERENCE ACCOMPLISHED LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE. THERE WERE NO IDEOLOGICAL FIREWORKS DURING OR BETWEEN THE SESSIONS. LEVEL OF QUANTITY OF

REPRESENTATION DROPPED NOTICEABLY AFTER THE FIRST DAY.

ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN COUNTRIES, FIFTEEN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND FIVE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS HAD BEEN UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 TUNIS 03194 02 OF 02 031342Z

INVITED. AT THE OPENING SESSION, 75 STATES WERE REPRESENTED WITH 55 AT THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL. OUR INFORMANTS -- FRIENDLY EMBASSIES AND JOURNALISTS -- TELL US THAT NUMBERS ATTENDING (ESPECIALLY THOSE OF THE LABOR MINISTERS) DWINDLED FOR THE REMAINING TWO DAYS' DELIBERATIONS. EMBASSY ACCESS WAS LIMITED TO THE INAUGURAL SESSION; WE WERE NEITHER ACCORDED OBSERVER STATUS NOR ALLOWED INFORMAL ENTRY FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE CONFERENCE. ONE DIPLOMATIC SOURCE TOLD US THAT THE U.S. WAS DISCUSSED "IN THE CORRIDORS" MAINLY IN TERMS OF LAMENTATIONS FOR ITS DEPARTURE FROM THE ILO. THERE WERE NO ATTACKS AGAINST US NOR WERE THERE RESOLUTIONS SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSED TO OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH ILO.

10. EMBASSY TRANSMITTING CONFERENCE DOCUMENTATION TO DEPARTMENT UNDER SEPARATE COVER.
MULCAHY

NOTE BY OC/T: TUNIS 3194 NOT PASSED NAM COLLECTIVE.

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